

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 15 and 19, and claims 15 and 19 have been canceled accordingly. Claim 2 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claim 3, and claim 3 has been canceled accordingly. Claims 16-18 have been amended to change their dependency in view of the cancellation of claim 15.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested.

Objection to the Disclosure

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the disclosure because, according to the Examiner, the 371 parentage of the application should appear immediately after the title.

In response, and to expedite allowance, Applicants have amended the first sentence of the application to set forth a cross-reference to the PCT application. Accordingly, Applicants submit that this objection has been overcome, and thus withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Art Rejections

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-10, 12, 13 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by JP 2002-068719. Also, on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 11, 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2002-068719.

In response, Applicants note initially that claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claim 19 (including intervening claim 15), which has not been rejected, so the rejection of claim 1 has been overcome as a result. In this regard, Applicants submit that JP '719 does not disclose that the hydroxylamine is purified by ion exchange. Therefore, Applicants submit that the process of the amended claim 1 is patentable over JP '719.

Also, Applicants note that in present claims 1 and 2, reacting a salt of hydroxylamine with an alkali compound while keeping the reaction solution at a pH of 7 or more is one of the technical features.

Applicants note that JP '719 discloses a method for producing a hydroxylamine by reacting hydroxylammonium sulfate, which is a salt of hydroxylamine, with an alkali compound, for example, calcium oxide and/or calcium hydroxide, in the coexistence of an alcoholic compound which is a stabilizer.

Further, Applicants submit that in the method of JP '719, the alkali compound is added to a solution containing hydroxylammonium sulfate. On the other hand, the process of the amended claim 2 is characterized in that a salt of hydroxylamine is added to a reaction solution containing an alkali compound to keep the reaction solution at a pH of 7 or more. Therefore, Applicants submit that the process of the amended claim 2 is clearly different from that of JP '719.

In addition, Applicants submit that when the method of claims 1 and 2 is used, the produced hydroxylamine hardly forms a complex with a salt produced as a by-product and is less adsorbed to or taken into the by-product insoluble salt (see page 22, lines 9-22). As a result, the hydroxylamine can be obtained in high yield.

Applicants submit that the method of JP '719 corresponds to Comparative Example 1 of the present specification (see page 54, line 19 to page 53, line 16). In Comparative Example 1, the yield of hydroxylamine was clearly lower than that of Examples of the present invention.

As described above, Applicants submit that JP '719 neither discloses nor suggests the technical feature of the present invention and the effects due thereto. Thus, the present invention is patentable over JP '719, and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates that claims 20-39 are allowed, and the Examiner has objected to claim 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 20-39 are allowed, and that claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the Examiner's indication, Applicants submit that have amended claim 1 to incorporate the recitations of claim 19 (including intervening claim 15), and claims 15 and 19 have been canceled, thereby obviating the objection to claim 19 and placing claim 1 in allowable form. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon should be allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce E. Kramer
Registration No. 33,725

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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